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Woman leaves no doubt that everything was done with a purpose and that the methods followed were the result of long trial-and-error experimentation. The Missouri valley horticultural tribes knew the limitations of their natural environment and had devised practices that enabled them to get the most out of that environment.

Despite the subtitle, however, the book is not just a treatise on Hidatsa agriculture. In his foreword, Wilson says he decided at the beginning of his work that the materials of his thesis should not be presented as a study "merely in primitive agriculture," but rather "as a phase of material culture interpreting something of the inner life, of the soul, of an Indian" (p. 3). With this in mind and by letting Buffalo Bird Woman speak for herself, he has enabled her to emerge as an individual as well as a member of a tribe. As Hanson describes her in his introduction, she was a "staunch traditionalist" (p. xx), a defender of the old ways—and by virtue of that fact an ideal informant for an ethnologist seeking to record aspects of a culture that he believed to be vanishing.

Inevitably, her pride in her people and their customs lead her to make a few mildly derogatory remarks about whites. "White men do not seem to know very much about raising beans," she notes, telling of a school teacher who harvested his beans without treading and threshing the vines. "I think it would take him a very long time to harvest his beans in that manner," she concludes (p. 85). Even so, her regard for Wilson probably led her to moderate some of her comments on white civilization as she perceived it.

Hanson is assuredly right when he says that this book "remains one of the most detailed, in-depth accounts of aboriginal Native American agriculture ever published" (p. xxi). Yet it is more than that. By focusing on the consciousness of a single person, Wilson has presented some insights into Hidatsa lifeways that a more orthodox approach would not have achieved.

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The Life I've Been Living. By Moses Cruikshank. Recorded and compiled by William Schneider. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 1986. 132 pp. \$14.95 Paper.

Before going far in this short book I knew I would like to meet Moses Cruikshank whose life it chronicles, and when I had finished the account, I wished he had made it longer. I believe other readers will wish the same. Although considerably edited by William Schneider, its recorder, the text is largely in Moses's own words. He comes through as a very capable and likeable person, an active participant in the changing events of twentieth century Alaska, and a good story teller.

Moses was born in 1902 or 1906 in Chalkytsik which is in traditional Gwich'in (Kutchin) country, even though this point is not specified in the book. His maternal (?) grandfather, Chief Henry, traded at Fort Yukon and Moses used to trap with his maternal(?) uncle, Paul Henry, on the upper Porcupine River. These places too are in Gwich'in territory. No band affiliations are given, however, for any of Moses's kinsmen, or Native partners or friends whom he names. Most seem to be Gwich'in, Koyukon, or Tanana Indians, and a few are Eskimo. Schneider refers to Moses only as "Athabaskan" (Athapaskan), while Moses simply says "Indian," "Eskimo" or "Native" if the occasion warrants it. Sometimes he states that a person is White or Japanese, but usually he does not bother to give an individual's ethnic identity.

One reason for this apparent disinterest in ethnic ties may be that the original audiences for his stories already knew them. Another is probably that Moses himself represents a truly multicultural heritage and experience. His first memories are of a fishcamp above Fort Yukon, but his childhood from the age of five and his young manhood were spent at the Episcopal Church missions at Fort Yukon and Nenana. Like several other outstanding young Natives (John Fredson, Arthur Wright, and Walter Harper) raised at the missions before him, Moses learned how to care for and drive dogs, and he accompanied a number of different churchmen, including Archdeacon Stuck, as driver on their long winter circuits or helper on the summer boat journeys. Like the other boys mentioned he too went "outside" to Mt. Hermon School in Massachusetts, where he stayed for three years as a "working" student.

Moses had already earned part of his school expenses starting at the age of 12 as a summer "water boy" and "spike boy," for the Alaska Railroad and ending four years later as a laborer on a freight train hauling logs. On his return to Alaska he further

diversified his occupations. He helped put up mission buildings, traveling the Yukon River and its branches on the church workboat and learning to operate a portable sawmill. Years later he used this expertise constructing schools and houses under a state rural development program both at Beaver, the Yukon River terminus leading to the Chandalar and Koyukuk River goldfields, and at Arctic Village. To reach the latter place, he and a trained mechanic first had to repair two ancient "cats" which they then used to pull a heavy train of equipment (including a sawmill) on a midwinter crossing of the rugged mountains between the two villages.

By then Moses had already acquired many other skills. He had taught school briefly in the Tanana Indian village of Minto, mined near Fairbanks, and became a successful trapper. In fact, he settled his family in Beaver so he could help on his brother-in-law's trapline. For several years he prospected for gold with both Native and white partners.

During World War II Moses served in the U.S. Army for which he made useful suggestions about the best kinds of footwear, mitts and other equipment for the north. His suggestions sprang from long experience in many different kinds of northern travel, for as Moses modestly understates it, he had been "all over the interior" (p. 72).

His last wage earning years were as a maintenance man at the Beaver School. On his retirement in the 70s, the Bureau of Indian Affairs named the school after him, the first time it had so honored a living person.

Moses now lives in Fairbanks where, for the Fairbanks Native Association, he tells youngsters about the golden times when he learned to hunt and trap and travel with dogs. In his closing sentence he says: "And I think it's pretty good that people have an interest and if I can anyway help along that line, I'm glad to do all I can to help" (p. 109).

This sentiment conveys the high value placed on shared learning and teaching by a man who in earlier pages goes out of his way to acknowledge his debts to those who once taught him or gave him good advice. Moses speaks ill of nobody. "I don't like to say anything that will downgrade a man" (p. 15). He much prefers to characterize a person as an "old Alaskan" (p. 100) or as "well known and liked by everybody" (p. 42), whether the

individual is Native, White, Japanese or of some other nationality. As Schneider writes, Moses seems to be "comfortable in both the Native and non-Native world" (p. 119).

But one wonders. In the end there is a great deal we do not know about Moses's personal life and feelings. This is acknowledged in the second of the final two sections of the book, which are by Schneider. The first section briefly sketches the historical context for some of the events mentioned in Moses's stories. It also amplifies some of the data in the footnotes of various chapters and supplements the interesting photographs in the text. The last section touches on a few of the many problems raised by an attempt to reduce to print, for unknown readers, a narrator's oral stories told many times over a lifetime to a variety of audiences.

Schneider concludes that the book is really a combined "life history" and "life story." The distinction he makes, following J. T. Tilton, is that a life story conveys in the teller's own words exactly what he wants a particular audience to hear. A life history, by contrast, is analytic, interpretive, and arranged by someone other than the narrator of a life story. Through commentary and other means the life story is used to shed light on a particular segment or aspect of culture history, on a person's personality, and so on. Thus Schneider himself determined the sequential order of Moses's stories and contributed the footnotes and historical section. Moreover he sometimes melded several taped versions of an event into a single story or took other editorial liberties, though always with Moses's consent—hence the "combination of life story and life history" (p. 121).

Schneider does not, however, offer precise details on his editorial manipulations, even if he suggests the nature of them, nor can he fully treat in a few pages the complex theoretical issues raised by producing a book of this kind. A large and thoughtful literature has been building up on the topic of how to present oral autobiography in printed form. I doubt there will ever be a single "best" way to do this. Nevertheless each compiler or editor must, as Schneider does, minimally indicate how he has handled the precious material that old timers like Moses are willing to share with readers who will never hear his stories as they were actually told and retold in real life.

Those interested in Gwich'in culture or life stories will certainly

want to compare this autobiography with those of Gwich'in John Fredson (who is referred to above and who was Sapir's Kutchin informant) and of Belle Herbert and Katherine Peter, all published by the Alaska Native Language Center of the University of Alaska in both Gwich'in and English translation. Belle died in Chalkysik in the 1980s when she was over a hundred years old. The life she lived and told Katherine Peter about was very different from the life lived either by Katherine herself or the lives lived by the two mission boys, John Fredson and Moses Cruikshank. And the ways in which each told about or wrote about their lives in the native language differ markedly from the way in which Moses described his life in English to Schneider. Despite this a perceptive reader will discern values and actions in each of these accounts which he can with confidence label as Native Gwich'in or, at least, Athapaskan.

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Oglala Women: Myth, Ritual, and Reality. By Marla N. Powers. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1986. 241 pp. \$19.95.

Due to its depth, breadth, comprehensiveness, and versatility, *Oglala Women* is a richly fulfilling and challenging work to assess. Its author, an associate member of the graduate faculty in anthropology at Rutgers University, draws on twenty-seven years of experience and friendship with the Lakotas, especially those of the Red Cloud Community. An astute observer, researcher, and highly skilled anthropologist, Powers searches for and finds meaningful cultural patterns with which to interpret the lives and lifestyles of Oglala women, past and present.

The work consists of two parts—"The Past," and "The Present." It includes an historical prelude on the early history of the Lakotas, as well as the significant role the Bureau of Indian Affairs has played in the life of the Sioux. The book has notes, references, and an index. The scholarly material in the second part of this publication comes alive in the words of the Lakota women Powers interviewed.